



## **Preventive Health/Nutrition Services/Obesity Council Coordination – Fact Sheet**

This initiative is an unfunded mandate by the state legislature. Currently, State General Funds are used for the activities to exist. If state funding were to be awarded, the focus of the activities could be expanded to allow a wider impact, and would increase the ability to apply and obtain outside funding.

### **Objectives**

To coordinate the Louisiana Obesity Council to create awareness, enhance reporting mechanisms, identify resources, advise and assist agencies with development and implementation of evidence based obesity programs and ensure policy integrates with Healthy People 2010 goals.

To develop partnerships to promote healthy eating and physical activities, leverage resources and coordinate statewide efforts with public and private sector organizations to address childhood and adult obesity.

### **Performance Indicators**

Number of collaborative initiatives addressing Obesity

Number of LA Obesity Council Partners

% of geographic state represented in Obesity Prevention initiatives

### **Narrative**

The public health challenge of obesity was recognized and addressed by the Louisiana legislature in 1999 with the creation of the Louisiana Council on the Prevention and Management of Obesity. Originally, the coordination was delegated to the Department of Health and Hospitals-Office of Public Health Chronic Disease Program. While no funding exists for this statewide Council, since 2006 the Office of Public Health-Nutrition Services provides a 0.7-Public Health Nutritionist FTE to coordinate the Council. Partnership projects of the Council have grown to more than 50 public and private entities working collaboratively to strengthen the alignment, development and the implementation of programs, projects and research, to respond to the public health challenge of obesity. The Obesity Council's 2007-2010 Strategic Plan serves as the guiding document to influence policy and environmental change, monitoring and evaluation, health education and awareness, health care continuum and capacity building.

The main activities of the Obesity Council's coordinator are:

- develop collaborations with public and private entities
- develop and implement public health prevention initiatives
- leverage resources and coordinate statewide efforts aimed at decreasing the prevalence of obesity
- promote physical activity
- improve dietary behaviors related to population burden of obesity

The Public Health Nutritionist works with public and private entities to develop and implement nutrition, physical activity and obesity prevention initiatives. For example, initiatives are implemented in collaboration with state Programs such as the WIC Program, and the Department of Education for the implementation of the School Wellness Policy. To guide these efforts, the CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Prevention provides technical assistance and training to the Public Health Nutritionist to position the state for future federal funding opportunities to develop the LA Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Prevention Program.

Obesity is a multifaceted problem that requires multifaceted approaches. No single strategy will have an impact on the prevalence of obesity. To effectively reduce population rates of obesity, it is critical to develop comprehensive obesity prevention programs. Those programs should intervene at multiple levels of the socio-ecological model. Not only should initiatives target healthy nutrition, but they should also address cultural and environmental levels such as city infrastructures, since they are factors contributing to the physical activity of Louisiana citizens and their health as a result. The plan is to use multiple evidence based intervention strategies in a variety of settings utilizing CDC's Framework for Preventing Obesity. Collaboration and coordination of these interventions, tracking and evaluation of each component are critical to our success. The development of a sustainable state level infrastructure to implement a comprehensive approach to prevent and control obesity would greatly enhance the impact on the obesity epidemic in Louisiana.

## **Better Health**

Activities conducted by the Louisiana Obesity Council advance the State Outcome Goal of "Better Health" as they address many requirements of the Request for Results:

### **Increasing access to comprehensive coordinated care**

Obesity activities include coordination of care with health systems, providers, and payers, according to best practices.

### **Use of other health indexes to evaluate health of Louisianans**

BRFSS, YRBS, School Based Health Center and BMI data, Louisiana Report Card on Physical activity and health for children and youth, PedNSS, PRAMS, CDC breastfeeding report card are used.

### **Healthy People 2010 goals**

Numerous collaborative obesity prevention projects have been implemented to influence the following evidence-based target behaviors identified by CDC to impact obesity, and aligned with

Healthy People 2010 goals:

- \*Increase intake of fruits and vegetables
- \*Reduce intake of energy dense foods
- \*Reduce intake of sugary beverage

- \*Increase physical activity
- \*Reduce screen time
- \*Promote breastfeeding

### **Geographic distribution of providers and facilities**

The Louisiana Obesity Council along with its partners across the state aims at reaching the entire Louisiana population.

### **Cultural competence**

The Louisiana Obesity Council aims to empower Louisiana citizens to lead a responsible, healthy life that prevents or reduces obesity and related health conditions

### **Social environment**

The Louisiana Obesity Council promotes breastfeeding in the community, which has a proven impact on the prevention of obesity in children. WIC Program State Agency staff members are part of the Louisiana Obesity Council. Through the Council's collaborative efforts with the Fruits & Veggies More Matters social marketing campaign, the WIC Farmers' Market Program and the WIC food package, Louisiana citizens are encouraged to increase their intake of fruits and vegetables.

### **Physical environment**

The mission of the Louisiana Obesity Council is to promote an environment that supports opportunities for all Louisiana residents to make healthy food choices and to be physically active in order to achieve or maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle. The Obesity council collaborates with State Agencies and public sector organizations on statewide projects such as complete streets, safe routes to schools, pedestrian/bike trails, access to healthy foods, healthy school vending and increasing physical activity in school.

### **Promote healthy lifestyles**

The Louisiana Obesity Council promotes nutrition education and physical activity, in order to impact Louisianans' lifestyles.

### **Collaboration with public and private entities**

Current **partnership projects** of the Louisiana Council on Obesity Prevention & Management's 2007-2010 Strategic Plan:

- **School Wellness Policy Implementation Project** (*LA Obesity Council, Governor's Office/National Governors Association, LSU AgCenter, Dept of Education, Rapides Foundation, LA Action for Healthy Kids*)
- **Childhood Obesity and Public Health Conference & Louisiana's Report Card on Physical Activity & Health for Children and Youth** (*Pennington Biomedical Research Center (PBRC), BCBS, Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center (OLOLRMC), LPHI, LA Obesity Council*)
- **Healthy Food Retail Study Group** (*SR 112 Senator Duplessis, Tulane Prevention Research Center, LA Obesity Council, Dept of Agriculture, LSU AgCenter*)
- **2008 Louisiana Obesity, Nutrition and Physical Activity Inventory** (*DHH Service Learning Program, DHH Chronic Disease Programs, LA Obesity Council*)

- **Built Environment-Safe Routes to Schools, Pedestrian/Bike Trails, Complete Streets** (*Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX), AARP, Dept of Transportation, LA Obesity Council, AAP*)
- **Development of 5 Regional “Louisiana Action for Healthy Kids Teams”** (*LA Obesity Council, Southeast LA AHEC, Southeast Dairy Assoc, DHH Maternal and Child Health Program, Dept of Education, Rapides Foundation, Growing Up Fit Together*)
- **Legislative Wellness Day-“Step Up to the Plate” to Reduce Healthcare Cost and Improve Quality of Life of Louisiana Citizens** (*American Heart Association, Louisiana Dietetic Association (LDA), Louisiana Association for Physical Health, Education, Recreation and Dance (LAPHERD), LA Obesity Council*)
- **Annual Cecil J Picard Award for Excellence in Education to Prevent Childhood Obesity** (*LA Obesity Council, Dept of Education, LSU Health Science Center*)
- **Annual School Health Awards**(*Dept of Educ, LDA, PBRC, LA Obesity Council, Environment and Health Council of Louisiana*)
- **WIC Fit Kids=Happy Kids** (*Louisiana Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Breast Feeding Peer Counseling, Fruits & Veggies More Matters, LA Obesity Council*)
- **Trim Kids Weight Management Program** (*YMCA, LSU Health Science Center*)
- **Mayor Holden’s Healthy City Initiative** (*LA Obesity Council, OLOLRMC, LSU AgCenter, CPEX, PBRC, Baton Rouge Office of the Mayor- President, Baton Rouge Area Foundation, American Heart Assoc*)

### **Current Obesity Council Members**

AARP

Louisiana Dietetic Association

Louisiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

Louisiana Department of Education

Louisiana Department of Insurance

Louisiana Department of Labor

Louisiana Department of Health & Hospitals (DHH)

- Office of Mental Health

- Office of Public Health (OPH)

Louisiana Department of Social Services

Louisiana Governor’s Office

Louisiana Health Insurance Association

Louisiana Health Plan

Louisiana Managed Care Association

Louisiana Medical Association

Louisiana Pharmacists Association

Louisiana Physical Therapy Association

Louisiana Public Health Association

Louisiana Restaurant Association

Louisiana State House of Representatives

Louisiana State Medical Society

Louisiana State Nurses Association

Louisiana State Senate Office

Louisiana State University - Agricultural Center

Louisiana State University – Health Science Center  
 Ochsner Medical Foundation  
 Pennington Biomedical Research Center  
 Tulane University-School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine  
 Southern University Agriculture College  
 University of Louisiana – Monroe  
 Action for Healthy Kids  
 Alliance for a Healthier Generation  
 American Heart Association  
 Baton Rouge Area Foundation  
 Baton Rouge General Pediatric Rehab Center  
 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana-LA 2 Step  
 Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX)  
 Christus Health  
 Environment & Health Council of Louisiana  
 Healthy Lifestyle Choices  
 Louisiana Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (LAHPERD)  
 Louisiana Department of Agriculture-Farmers Markets  
 Louisiana DHH-Community Health Promotion & Chronic Disease Programs  
 -Diabetes/Heart/Asthma/Tabacco/BRFSS  
 -Bureau of Policy, Research and Program Development  
 Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development-Safe Routes to Schools  
 Louisiana Public Broadcasting (LPB)  
 Louisiana Public Health Institute (LPHI)  
 Louisiana Healthcare Alliance Wellness Workgroup  
 Louisiana OPH Programs  
 -Fruits & Veggies More Matters (5-A Day), Breastfeeding Peer Counseling, WIC Fit Kids,  
 -Maternal & Child Health, Policy, Planning & Evaluation, School Based Health Centers in Schools  
 Rapides Foundation  
 Rocket Kidz Foundation  
 Rocket Chix Foundation  
 Southeast Dairy Association  
 Southeast Louisiana Area Health Education Center  
 The Links, Incorporated  
 University of Louisiana-Lafayette, Cecil J Picard Center for Child Development  
 Wellness Works Cenla  
 Woman's Foundation Healthy Lifestyle Coalition  
 YMCA of Greater New Orleans/Louisiana State Alliance of YMCA's

**Prevention (target activities with a high degree of success; promote healthy lifestyles, incl. proper nutrition, exercise, regular check-ups, and routine screenings). System should work to eliminate racial, gender, age, geographic and socio-economic health disparities:**

Obesity prevention strategy includes CDC's evidence-based target behaviors (increased fruits & vegetable consumption, increased physical activity, etc.) to impact obesity.

**State statute governing the Louisiana Obesity Council: RS 46:2611, 2612, 2613.**

Obesity rates continue to climb and the resulting medical complications are having a devastating effect on the quality of life in Louisiana citizens and the state budget. According to the Trust for America's Health Report (2008), Louisiana has the 8<sup>th</sup> highest rate of adult obesity and the 7<sup>th</sup> highest rate of overweight youths (ages 10-17). Prevention is needed in order to decrease the need for more expensive tertiary care and to decrease the prevalence of children being diagnosed with adult diseases. Louisiana spends nearly \$1.4 billion annually on obesity-attributed health care expenses. A study conducted by RTI International and CDC reported that \$75 billion was spent in 2003 on obesity-attributable medical expenditures. Half of this amount consisted of expenses financed by taxpayers to cover costs incurred by Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries (Finkelstein et al., 2004). Researchers discovered that costs attributed to obesity increased by 20% with mild obesity, 50% with moderate obesity and nearly 200% with severe obesity. There were also marked increases in physician visits, an increase of 88% observed between 1988 and 1994 (Thompson et al, 1999).

The Louisiana Council on Obesity Prevention & Management utilizes:

- guidance from the CDC Framework for Preventing Obesity model and the Institute of Medicines Evaluation Framework for Obesity Prevention Policies and Interventions,
- the State Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity (NAPO) Program Technical Assistance Manual, provided by CDC Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity,
- Recommended Community Strategies and Measures to Prevent Obesity in the United States: Implementation and Measurement Guide+

Summary:

[http://www.healthcare4kc.org/uploadedFiles/Resources/CDCRecommendedObesityStrategies%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.healthcare4kc.org/uploadedFiles/Resources/CDCRecommendedObesityStrategies%20(2).pdf)

Guide:

[http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/downloads/community\\_strategies\\_guide.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/downloads/community_strategies_guide.pdf)

- Action Strategies Toolkit: A Guide for Local and State Leaders Working to Create Healthy Communities and Prevent Childhood Obesity released by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.
- Local Government Actions to Prevent Childhood Obesity released by the Institute of Medicine (IOM).

The Council members continued efforts in educating legislators and colleagues influenced policy related to nutrition, physical activity and obesity, which is reflected in the enactment of the following legislation:

***2004 Regular Session***

**Senate Bill No. 871-Act 734- Physical Activity & Award Program**

Subject: Physical fitness and nutrition of students. Establishment and implementation of a pilot program and award program for outstanding program of physical activity. Public schools, grades K-6 provide 30 minutes each school day of quality, moderate to vigorous physical activity for students.

***2005 Regular Session***

Senate Bill No. 146-Act 331- Vending Bill

Relative to school nutrition programs to limit the sale of certain beverages and foods in public elementary and secondary schools during specified time periods.

***2006 Regular Session***

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 45

“Obesity Awareness Day” April 26, 2006

***2007 Regular Session***

Senate Bill No. 362-Act 180 - Physical Education Coordinator in the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE)

Requires the LDE to hire a health and physical education coordinator who will be responsible for the development, implementation, and monitoring of health and physical education curricula in all public elementary and secondary schools in the state.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 104- Request the LDE to study the feasibility of developing and implementing a statewide health education curriculum and physical fitness assessment for grades K-12.

***2009 Louisiana Legislative Session***

**Policy related to nutrition, physical activity and obesity**

**HB 400/Act No. 286** by Rep Williams: Required physical activity for students and establishment of school health advisory councils.

**HB 767/Act No. 306** by Rep Williams: High school beverages

**SB 309/Act No. 256** by Sen Gray: Provides for health-related fitness assessments to determine physical fitness levels of students in schools.

**SB 299/Act No. 252** by Sen Duplessis: Healthy Food Retail Act

**SCR 110** by Sen McPherson, Alario, Amedee, Broome, et al: Complete Streets Workgroup in the Department of Transportation & Development

**HB 725/Act No. 147** by Rep Michael Jackson, Abramson, Aubert, et al: Bicyclists and vehicle safety

**HB 516** by Rep Williams: Establishes the Center for Excellence for Autism Spectrum Disorder Fund and the Walking the Walk for our kids fund in the state treasury. (Vetoed)

**HB 802/Act No. 226** To create the Walking the Walk for Our Kids Fund

**SR 32 and HR 31**-2009 Legislative Wellness Day

**SCR 77** by Sen Mount: DHH & Dept of Educ to examine the adequacy of current practices for ensuring preventative health & well-being of adolescents in Louisiana